EXETER & TEIGN VALLEY RAILWAY

Telephone:-
Christow (01647) 253108
Internet:-
www.teignrail.co.uk

Christow Station,
Doddiscombsleigh,
EXETER,
Devonshire
EX6 7YT

Your reference:- 0400/01

Please quote this reference:- 1300
13th August, 2001

Dartmoor National Park Authority,
Parke,
Bovey Tracey,
Newton Abbot
TQ13 9JQ

COPY

Dear Sirs,

Objection to Proposed Residential Development at Moretonhampstead Station

In all the consideration and discussion of this case, there seems to be a notable reluctance to mention the origin of the site from which Station Road takes its name. The terminus of the multi-million pound transport engineering work is downgraded to a mere "haulage yard," as if nobody wants to acknowledge the truth by describing the place correctly. This is a common failing in a country which has disavowed its railways.

Yet the fact that this case is under consideration at all is because the railway put the so-called haulage yard on the map. Were it not for the railway, it is unlikely that anything other than some miserable 1930s ribbon development would have occurred along what is now Station Road.

Proper designation would not be so important if the origin of the site bore no relation to its future and ultimate use. Guided transport - most probably in the form of heavy rail - will return to Moretonhampstead and there will be a station on this site again; a terminus to begin with, but later the line will be extended to Chagford.

Calling this site by its proper name, rather than referring to the environmentally offensive operation that for the moment occupies the place, would help the authority recognise what it is dealing with, even though at this stage it can do no other than hinder the inevitable.

The era of cheap oil and the crackpot transport it makes possible will continue to its bitter end. The more conscientious officers and members will understand this, but they have no sympathetic planning guidance and nothing exists in central government transport policy which is remotely relevant to the very long term (in democratic terms, five years). Like most authorities, though, Dartmoor as a whole is anti-rail, or perhaps pro-road by default, and it is therefore likely that Moretonhampstead Station will remain an embarrassment.

Almost by accident, then, the authority made the correct

decision to reject the proposal for a housing development and it must also refuse the new application for fewer homes on the same grounds. The authority is absolutely right to insist that the station be reserved for light industry and commerce, even though there is clearly a current surplus of such land in Moretonhampstead. Residential development on the scale proposed, anyway unnecessary, would be inappropriate for this satellite of the town.

It is hoped that the authority will be consistent in its interpretation of planning policy and will not stoop to bargaining with the road haulier for some sort of perceived planning gain.

Yours faithfully,

COPY

C. Burges
Owner and Operator

Encl.